

WEARDALE

Rural District Council

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1951  
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CROOK

LINTONS, PRINTERS, CHURCH STREET

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WEARDALE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of Medical Officer of Health for 1951.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Herewith I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year 1951:-

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions:

Area of District	—	—	99,652 acres
Registrar-General's estimate of population			9,095
Number of inhabited houses at end of year			3,032
Rateable Value	—	—	£52,711.
Sum represented by a penny rate	—		£196 15s. 10d.

Employment

The Wolsingham Steel Works have continued their high rate of production.

Fluorspar has been mined in Stanhope, Rookhope, Cambokeels and Upper Weardale. This industry is steadily expanding in the dale and giving employment to an increasing number of men and women.

Limestone and ganister quarrying continues to give high employment rates to those engaged in it.

The general level of employment in the dale has remained high.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

There were 111 total births (alive and still) :-

Live Births	...	108
Still Births	...	3
		<hr/>
		111.
		<hr/>

LIVE BIRTHS

	Male	Female
Legitimate	45	58
Illegitimate	3	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	48	60
	<hr/>	<hr/>

STILL BIRTHS

	Male	Female
Legitimate	2	1
Illegitimate	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>

On an estimated population of 9,095 these figures give the following rates per 1,000 population :-

Total Births	...	12.2
Live Births	...	10.77
Still Births	...	0.33

The rates for England and Wales were :-

Live Births	...	15.5
Still Births	...	0.36

The birth rate for the Area has again fallen, being 13.1 in 1950 and 14.06 in 1949. The still birth rate has fallen from 0.5 in 1950.

DEATHS

The number of deaths registered as pertaining to this district were :-

Males	...	89
Females	...	75
		<hr/>
Total	...	164
		<hr/>

These figures give a total death rate per 1,000 population of 18.03 compared with 15.05 for the year 1950. The death rate for England and Wales was 12.5 per 1,000 population.

MATERNAL DEATHS

There were no maternal deaths during the year.

INFANTILE DEATHS

All causes under one year :—

These numbered 7 and were as follows:

	Male	Female
Legitimate	5	2
Illegitimate	0	0
	—	—
Total	5	2
	—	—

DEATHS OF INFANTS under 4 weeks:—

There were 3 such deaths:

	Male	Female
Legitimate	2	1
Illegitimate	0	0
	—	—
Total	2	1
	—	—

These figures give an Infant Mortality Rate, per 1,000 Live Births of 64.8.

The rate for England and Wales is 29.6, a decrease of 0.2 on the previous year.

DEATHS FROM CANCER.

These numbered 20, which represents 12.18 per cent of all deaths and a cancer rate of 2.19 per 1,000 population.

DEATHS FROM MEASLES Nil

DEATHS FROM WHOOPING COUGH Nil

DEATHS FROM ENTERITIS AND DIARRHOEA
(Under 2 years) Nil

CAUSES OF DEATH

CAUSES OF DEATH				Males.	Females.
All Causes	...	...	..	89	75
1	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	...	...	2	3
2	Tuberculosis Other	..	...	0	1
3	Syphilitic Diseases...	...	...	0	0
4	Diphtheria	...	...	0	0
5	Whooping Cough	...	...	0	0
6	Meningococcal Infections	...	...	0	0
7	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	0	0
8	Measles	...	...	0	0
9	Other Infective & Parasitic Diseases	..	...	0	0
10	Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	...	...	3	0
11	Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	...	...	2	0
12	Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	..	...	0	1
13	Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	...	...	0	0
14	Other Malignant & Lymphatic Neoplasms	...	...	9	5
15	Leukæmia, Aleukæmia	...	...	0	0
16	Diabetes	...	...	0	2
17	Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	...	...	23	16
18	Coronary Disease, Angina	...	...	15	3
19	Hypertension with Heart Disease	...	...	0	2
20	Other Heart Diseases	...	..	5	13
21	Other circulatory Diseases	...	...	4	5
22	Influenza	..	...	0	1
23	Pneumonia	...	..	4	3
24	Bronchitis	...	...	4	5
25	Other Diseases of the Respiratory System	...	...	0	0
26	Ulcer of Stomach & Duodenum	...	...	2	0
27	Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	...	...	0	1
28	Nephritis and Nephrosis	...	...	1	0
29	Hyperplasia of Prostate	...	...	2	0
30	Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	...	...	0	0
31	Congenital Malformations	...	...	1	0
32	Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	...	...	10	13
33	Motor Vehicle Accidents	...	...	0	0
34	All Other Accidents	...	...	2	0
35	Suicide	...	...	0	1
36	Homicide and Operations of War	...	...	0	0
Total				89	75

Appended are the birth rates and death rates for the preceeding seven years:-

	Birthrate	Deathrate
1944	16.7	14.2
1945	11.4	10.8
1946	17.3	14.1
1947	17.3	14.1
1948	12.8	12.3
1949	14.06	12.4
1950	13.1	15.05
1951	12.2	18.03

Out of the 164 total deaths, 93 were people aged 70 and over and of these 32 were aged 80 and over.

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

MEDICAL.

Medical Officer of Health (part-time)

DONALD THOMSON, O.B.E., M.B.

Tuberculosis Medical Officer

Venereal Diseases Medical Officer

School Medical Officer

Maternity & Child Welfare Medical Officer

Obstetric Consultants

} Under
Durham
County
Council

OTHERS

Sanitary Inspector,

R. G. SUDDICK, Cert. R.S.I., Lond., (whole time)

Health Visitor

Vetinary Surgeon

Public Analyst

} Under Durham County Council.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Bacteriological examinations of sputum, throat swabs and blood for diagnosis of Tuberculosis, Diphtheria and Typhoid-Fever are carried out at the Public Health Laboratories, Ponteland Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5. In addition, other examinations are carried out when necessary, e.g., Examinations of urine and faeces and virulence tests. This valuable work is carried out at the expense of the Durham County Council.

Every practitioner in the District can make use of these facilities and a copy of every report is sent to the Medical Officer of Health.

During the year 48 such examinations were carried out.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

The greater part of the district is served through the Ambulance Control Office, Bishop Auckland (Tel No. Bishop Auckland 810). One Ambulance Car is stationed at St. John's Chapel.

The villages of Hunstanworth and Edmundbyers are served from the Ambulance Control Office at Consett (Tel. No. Consett 411).

At Wolsingham the Wolsingham Steel Company still retain their own ambulance car for the use of their employees and dependents.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The whole of the Area with the exception of Stanhope and the sparsely inhabited neighbourhood of Hunstanworth is provided with district Nurse-Midwives, working under local Nursing Associations. These are all affiliated to and subsidised by the Durham County Nursing Association. At Stanhope the general nursing is done by a district nurse who is not maternity trained. Maternity cases are attended by the County Council Midwife stationed at Frosterley.

At Hunstanworth, a local Association subscribes to the neighbouring association in Northumberland and thus have the services of the Carterway Heads Nurse Midwife when required.

TREATMENT CENTRES.

Maternity and Child Welfare centres are in operation at Wolsingham, Stanhope and St. John's Chapel. A Venereal Diseases Clinic at Durham and a Tuberculosis Clinic at Bishop Auckland are available for the District. These are all under County Council control.

HOSPITALS.

There is no general hospital in the area. By far the greater part of the cases requiring hospital treatment are sent to the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which receives a fair amount of support from the District.

In Durham City, Dryburn Hospital and the Durham County Hospital received an increasing number of patients from this district. The General Hospital in Bishop Auckland, which was opened in 1948 is accommodating an increasing number of patients from this district.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances and General Provisions of Health Services in the Area.

WATER SUPPLIES

The water supplies in the Council's area of supply were well maintained and no serious shortage was reported

The following extensions were carried out:-

Stanhope - Extension of 3in. main to serve new housing estate at Ashcroft, Stanhope, a distance of 245 yards approximately.

Whitfield Brow,
Frosterley - Construction of storage chamber and laying approximately 220 yards 2in. main to serve cottages at Whitfield Brow, Frosterley.

Repairs to mains and services were carried out by your workmen on 185 instances.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

The following extensions were carried out:-

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wearhead | - Extension of 6in. sewer to serve cottages at Lobley Hill, Wearhead. |
| Whitfield Brow,
Frosterley | - Construction of septic tank and laying of sewer to serve cottages at Whitfield Brow, Frosterley. |

In addition minor improvements, including digging over and re-levelling land used for treatment, re-arrangement of feeder channels and clearing and relaying land drains were carried out at the various sewage works. 32 stoppages in sewers and 28 in drains were cleared by your workmen.

Interviews and inspections were carried out in co-operation with the Council's Consulting Engineer, for the preparation of schemes for Sewerage and Sewage Disposal under the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act 1944.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

Consulations and inspections were carried out in conjunction with the Inspector of the Wear and Tees River Board.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION

Eighteen applicants took advantage of the Council's scheme allowing a grant up to a maximum of £8 for converting existing sanitary accommodation to the water carriage system, 20 dry closets were so converted.

The closets of each type at the end of the year were:-

Water Closets	- 1606
Ash Closets	- 827
Ashpit-Privies	- 263

PUBLIC CLEANSING - REFUSE REMOVAL

Apart from the outlying properties, the greater part of your Area is covered by the Cleansing Service.

The estimated weight of refuse removed during the year was 4,419 tons and the mileage covered by the vehicles was 18,542. The total cost of the Cleansing Services during the year was £4,329.

Refuse was disposed of at the main tip at Frosterley and also at Crawleyside, Cowhill, Rookhope, Edmundbyers and Tow Law.

RATS & MICE DESTRUCTION ACTS

The Rodent Officer has been fully engaged during the year when systematic treatment of dwelling houses, business premises, refuse tips, sewers and sewer fields was carried out.

Summary of year's work:-

	Number of Baiting Points	Number of "Takes"	Estimated Kill
Sewers	425	46	499
Sewer Fields	97	38	288
Refuse Tips	146	78	585
Houses etc.	957	462	3459

SHOPS ACT - Ventilation and Temperature

Inspections have been carried out and no action was found necessary.

ICE CREAM REGULATIONS

Inspections were carried out in connection with the storing and selling of ice-cream.

SMOKE ABATEMENT

No action was found necessary during the year - the district having few industries of the type usually associated with smoke nuisance.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Nature of Inspections	Number	Notices		Complied with
		Informal	Formal	
Infectious Diseases	10	0	0	0
Disinfection	11	0	0	0
Nuisances	6	2	0	2
Dwellings	94	9	0	9
Sanitary Accommodation	24	12	0	12
Water Supply	85	0	0	0
House Drainage	42	5	0	5

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Meat and Other Foods

No slaughtering for sale is done in the district under existing conditions.

Visits have been carried out to shops and stores in the district and these are generally well kept.

Food was condemned as unfit for sale on 20 instances, in each case the food was surrendered voluntarily under Ministry of Food Regulations.

There are four bakehouses in the district. These are satisfactory.

FACTORIES ACTS

Inspections were carried out under the Factories Acts. One case of insufficient sanitary accommodation and one instance of limewashing of premises, were dealt with during the year.

SECTION D.

HOUSING

(a) By Contract

58 traditional type houses were completed and occupied during the year, as follows:-

Wolsingham	...	14
Stanhope	...	27
St. John's Chapel	...	9
Wearhead	...	8

60 houses were also under course of construction:-

Wolsingham	...	24
Frosterley	...	20
Stanhope	...	13
St. John's Chapel	...	3

(b) By Direct Labour

The Council did not undertake the erection of any new houses by Direct Labour during the year. A cottage at Daddry Shield, which was purchased by the Council was altered and brought up to modern standards.

Works on site preparation by the construction of roads and sewers was further advanced at Wolsingham, Frosterley. St. John's Chapel and Wearhead.

The total number of houses erected under the Council's housing programme in the post-war period to the 31st December, 1951 is 189.

(c) By Private Enterprise

One house at Wolsingham was completed and occupied and another house at Stanhope was in course of erection.

Works on other property by means of conversion were completed and two additional houses were so provided.

SECTION E.

Prevalence of, and control over, Infectious Disease

I received 140 notifications during the year, these were as follows:-

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Deaths
Smallpox	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	10	9	0
Pneumonia	2	0	7
Measles	82	0	0
Diphtheria	1	1	0
Erysipelas	6	0	0
Whooping Cough	39	0	0
Para-Typhoid Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0	0	0
Meningitis	0	0	0
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	0	0	0
Dysentery	0	0	0
Enteric Fever	0	0	0
Meningococcal Infection	0	0	0
Food Poisoning	0	0	0
	<hr/> 140	<hr/> 10	<hr/> 7

The epidemic of measles was mainly confined to the lower part of the dale at Wolsingham and Frosterley.

Only one case of Diphtheria was notified during the year, in this instance a patient aged 21, a German, who was at the Harperley Agricultural Hostel.

TUBERCULOSIS

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 year ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 to 4 years ...	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
5 to 14 years ...	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
15 to 24 years ...	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 to 34 years ...	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
35 to 44 years ...	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 to 54 years ...	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 to 64 years ..	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	1
65 and over ...	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	-
Totals ...	4	5	1	2	2	3	-	1

At the end of the year the number of cases on the register was:-

	Respiratory	Non Respiratory
Males	42	23
Females	38	25
	<hr/> 80 <hr/>	<hr/> 48 <hr/>

There were six deaths from Tuberculosis - 5 the result of Respiratory Tuberculosis and one Non Respiratory. Six cases (all Respiratory) were removed from the register having either been notified as recovered or had left the district.

The Tuberculosis Death Rate for the year was 0.66 per 1,000 population compared with 0.76 for the year 1950.

I am,

Yours obediently,

DONALD THOMSON.

